

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2496

As Passed House:
February 15, 2010

Title: An act relating to ballot design.

Brief Description: Modifying ballot design provisions.

Sponsors: House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives White, Orwall, Chase, Dickerson, Carlyle, Upthegrove, Springer, Nelson, Simpson, Miloscia, Dunshee and Hunt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/12/10, 1/15/10 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/15/10, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires that ballots have a clear delineation between the instructions and where voting is to begin.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Hurst and Taylor.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

Clear and concise instructions must be printed at the top of each ballot directing the voter on how to mark the ballot. Questions of adopting constitutional amendments or any other state measure must appear immediately after the ballot instructions and before listing any offices.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Ballots must have a clear delineation between the ballot instructions and where the voting is to begin. This delineation may be through the use of white space, illustration, shading, color, symbol, font size, or bold type. The Secretary of State must establish standards for ballot design and layout.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The ballot was very full. The ballot design made it difficult to see Initiative 1033, which may have dropped off some voting on that question. The bill still allows flexibility in ballot design, but there must be a clear delineation between the ballot instructions and questions.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative White, prime sponsor; Sam Reed, Secretary of State; Katie Blinn, Office of the Secretary of State; Kim Wyman, Washington Association of County Auditors; and Lori Augino, Pierce County Auditor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.